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update

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The Global Environment Facility helps developing countries tackle international environmental problems. The GEF is supporting a project in Mauritania to develop wind-powered turbines.

Agreement reached on \$2 billion fund for global environment

Representatives from 87 countries committed themselves to provide \$2 billion for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) over the next three years, and resolved their remaining differences on the GEF's new governance structures.

In the new agreement, a Participants Assembly with universal representation will meet every three years to review and evaluate general policies, operations and membership. An Executive Council will meet at least every six months and will be chaired jointly by the GEF's chief executive officer and a chairperson elected from Council Members. The chief executive officer will manage the work programme and run the GEF on a day-to-day basis. The elected chair will preside on matters of accountability including the performance of the CEO and the Secretariat, as well as broad policy matters.

The meeting of GEF delegates, held on 14-16 March in Geneva, followed intensive negotiations which took place after member countries were unable to reach agreement late last year in Colombia on new rules and structures of the GEF, a fund which helps developing countries tackle global environmental problems.

The GEF has been operating on a pilot basis since 1991, run jointly by UNDP, the World Bank and the UN Environment Programme. It addresses global environmental activities in four areas: prevention of global warming; conservation of biological diversity; protection of interna-

tional waters; and reduction of ozone layer depletion. The GEF gained a role at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro as an interim funding mechanism for the implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biodiversity.

Under the restructured GEF, 16 of the 32 seats on the Executive Council will go to developing countries, 14 to industrialized nations and two to countries of economies in transition from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Voting, in the absence of consensus, will require a 60 per cent majority of countries, and approval by donor countries representing at least 60 per cent of contributions. This gives both donors and recipients a veto.

The United States pledged \$430 million, Japan \$410 million and Germany \$395 million for the three-year replenishment.

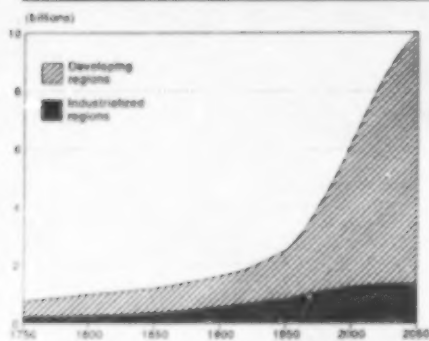
New report shows poverty and consumption rates aggravate environmental impacts of population growth

A new report released by the World Resources Institute (WRI) reveals that the expansion of global agriculture to feed increasing numbers of people has degraded 1.2 billion hectares — 10.5 per cent of the world's vegetated land, an area roughly the size of China and India combined — since 1945.

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Trends and Projections in World Population Growth, 1750 - 2025



Sources: UN Population Division, Population Reference Bureau

Furthermore, the environmental impacts of population growth in the industrialized world are magnified by affluence and high per capita consumption. Industrialized countries consume nearly half of all the fossil fuels produced annually worldwide, most of the metals, and a large share of other industrial materials and forest products. The per capita level of consumption of the largest industrialized countries is often several times higher than that of the world average.

The *World Resources 1994-95* is a global report on environmental conditions and trends prepared biennially by WRI. It is written in collaboration with UNDP and the UN Environment Programme.

According to the report, the world's population is expected to grow from 5.5 billion today to 8.5 billion over the next 30 years. Most of the increase will come from the developing world, where the population is expected to jump to 7.1 billion. The number of people living in industrialized countries will rise from 1.2 to 1.4 billion.

Family planning alone is not the sum total of population policies. The report indicates that misguided property rights laws, agricultural policies, and dismal economic conditions often heighten pressure on fragile natural resources.

According to Allen Hammond, editor-in-chief of *World Resources 1994-95*, "Bal-

ancing economic development with environmental concerns is crucial. If current consumption patterns in industrial countries continue and if industrialization of developing countries follows similar lines, today's environmental problems can only deepen. The choice is developing vastly more efficient technologies or changing our lifestyles — or both."

Norway contributes more than \$2 million to help UNDP Palestinian programme

The Government of Norway contributed \$2,020,000 to the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People. The funds will be used for four specific projects: to strengthen municipal and local public administration, improve agricultural planning in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, organize the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, and promote the role of women in the Palestinian society and economy. UNDP established a trust fund for the receipt and administration of this contribution.

The creation of the trust fund comes at a time when the Palestinian community needs assistance for long-range planning in the Occupied Territories. The signing of an agreement of principles between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel in Washington, D.C. in September 1993 provided an unparalleled opportunity for the Palestinian community to seize the initiative to plan for the growth and development of the West Bank and Gaza.

While the opportunity is there, a depth of expertise in macro and micro planning is not always available in the Occupied Territories. Therefore, approximately \$1 million of the trust fund will be used to provide the Palestinian authority with planning experts and strategists in a variety of social and economic fields. Through a combination of technical as-

sistance, on-the-job training, and technical training, this support will help build planning, managerial and administrative capabilities in Palestinian public sector institutions.

UNDP is currently providing assistance to the newly-established Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, which will receive \$660,000 of the Norwegian contribution. This new Bureau of Statistics will diagnose needs, generate data required for proper allocation of public services and ensure effective development planning for the Palestinian population.

Roughly \$250,000 of the trust fund will be used to help integrate women into future Palestinian governance and development institutions. Public awareness campaigns promoting the value of education for girls will be conducted. Schools and classrooms will be constructed in rural areas, and teachers and health care workers will be trained and sensitized to women's issues. Sustainable income generating activities will be developed to help ensure financial security for the women of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The remaining \$110,000 will be used to formulate a comprehensive and integrated national plan for agriculture. This support will help identify and quantify the constraints on agriculture, such as limited water sources, market competition and access to transportation and ports. Data will be collected and assessments made on such issues as availability of land for reclamation, agricultural training needs and employment opportunities in agriculture.

Big plans for non-governmental organizations at Small Islands Conference

Amid the build-up for the Population Conference in September and the Social Summit and Women's Conference next year, the first global test of the landmark Rio consensus on Agenda 21 is about to take place in a month's time in Barbados.

The first UN Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, to be held from 25 April - 6 May, will be a worldwide meeting on the problems and prospects of some 50 small vulnerable countries that comprise a quarter of the United Nations membership. The conference will examine a broad range

of environmental and developmental issues relating to sustainability. It will showcase and market affordable environmental technologies and services which can assist small island developing states to achieve more sustainable patterns of development.

The third major NGO activity will be the Village of Hope, an exposition set up through the Governor-General of Barbados. The village will consist of a theme park which will reflect communal ideas and hopes of development. It will also display the accomplishments of NGOs from around the world.

UNDP has long been aware of the special circumstances and development needs of the world's small island countries. During its current five-year programming cycle (1992-1996), UNDP is planning to allocate more than \$154 million to assist these vulnerable countries. These resources are helping islanders address such important concerns as safeguarding the environment, human resources training, disaster warning systems, and health, water and sanitation needs.

search centres around the world. Users from outside Ukraine will also be able to access legal, commercial and technical data on Ukraine.

Moldova strengthens its democratic institutions

UNDP is providing immediate short-term assistance to Moldova's judiciary and newly-elected Parliament during a crucial turning point for these two key democratic institutions. Technical support will be provided in the fields of drafting laws, coordinating law-making, and establishing an efficient organizational structure in Parliament.

The Republic of Moldova declared its independence in 1991. The present Parliament is the result of a peaceful transformation of the former Soviet Republic of Moldova. In October 1993 the Parliament decided to dissolve itself. New elections took place late last month.

This new Parliament begins its work at the end of March. It has an enormous backlog of tasks. More than 225 laws have been prepared over the past year, for example. Most of them are still in draft form, pending approval and adoption of a new Constitution.

The current intensive period of law-making has created an extreme demand for expertise in drafting laws, and in coordinating the work between the ministries and Parliament. Furthermore, since the old constitution reflected the previous political and economic system, there will inevitably be enormous changes in the organization and working methods of the new Parliament. Similarly, the judiciary retains many traits inherited from the past.

The successful transformation of Moldova into a sovereign nation, based on democratic rules and principles, depends largely on the country's ability to reform its basic state institutions. UNDP-supported short-term experts will offer on-the-job training for drafting of laws.



The Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will examine the problems and prospects of some 50 small vulnerable countries. Tourists on the beaches in southern Cyprus.

of environmental and developmental issues relating to sustainability.

Three sets of non-governmental activities will take place during the conference. First, the NGO Forum will run a series of workshops to examine special challenges facing small island communities and the constraints of current development patterns. An action plan for alternative models for sustainable human development will be developed. A programme of 22 workshops is currently envisaged, running from 20 April - 6 May.

Second, a sustainable development technology exhibition called SUSTECH '94 will be held from 28 April - 2 May.

Ukraine to gain access to Internet

Integration of Ukraine into the world community is fundamental to the country's progress in developing strong democratic institutions. Appropriate information and communications infrastructures are key to this process, but are at an incipient stage of development. For example, all computer communications from Ukraine destined for the Internet, the world's largest computer network that links millions of users worldwide, pass through Moscow.

Ukraine has no direct access to the Internet.

UNDP is assisting in establishing electronic data communications facilities, based on satellite technology. This will permit Ukraine's government agencies, academic institutions and NGOs to access United Nations databases, global data and electronic mail networks and computers operated by academic re-

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Consultants will help devise the organizational structure and the work methods of Parliament. Study tours and one-day courses on fundamental democratic principles will be given to members of Parliament.

This immediate and initial assistance in drafting of laws and establishing an efficient organizational structure in Parliament will lay the groundwork for a larger UNDP programme of assistance for governance and democracy in Moldova.

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for subcontracts with NGOs. Approximately \$600,000 will be earmarked for poverty and employment studies for the 1995 World Summit for Social Development. Executed by the Asian and Pacific Development Centre, the International Labour Organisation, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and United Nations Volunteers. Implemented by relevant ministries dealing with poverty programmes. (RAS/92/006)

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Approved projects

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(all projects subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

Regional Poverty Programme for Asia and the Pacific – This region has nearly one billion people living in poverty. The goal of this programme is to build capacities of governments, organizations and NGOs to carry out poverty alleviation efforts in the countries of the Asia and Pacific Region. Strategies and policies will be designed for creating employment, and ensuring credit for micro-enterprise development. Community-based poverty alleviation initiatives will be tested and expanded to other locales.

UNDP contribution: \$8,483,000.
Two-thirds of these resources will be used

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